

STEVENAGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the
year ended 31st December, 1949.

June, 1950.

To the Chairman and Members of the Stevenage
Urban District Council.

I beg to present the above report prepared in accordance with the directions
of Ministry of Health Circular 2/50.

SECTION A.

LOCAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	4,576
Residential Population - Mid. 1949 - (Registrar General's Estimate)	...	...	...	6,490
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	2,006
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£41 ,676
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£161

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the
Year 1949.

				Stevenage U.D. Comparable	
				Local Rate	Rate for England & Wales.
LIVE BIRTHS ..		Totals	M. F.		
	(Legitimate	107	62 45		
	(Illegitimate	3	- 3		
	(All	110	62 48		
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population				16.9	16.3.
STILLBIRTHS...		Totals	M. F.		
	(Legitimate	2	2 -		
	(Illegitimate	-	- -		
	(All	2	2 -		
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still)births				18	23
DEATHS		Totals	M. F.		
		85	37 48		
	Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population			13.1	11.7
<u>DEATH RATES OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.</u>					
All infants per 1,000 live births				18	32
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births				19	
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births				Nil	
Actual number of deaths under 1 year:					
Legitimate		2			
Illegitimate		-			
Total		2			
Deaths from Puerperal Causes				-	
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)				9	
Deaths from measles (all ages)				-	
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)				-	
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)				-	

COMMENT ON VITAL STATISTICS.

The estimated local population shows an increase of 77 over 1948. The local birth rate for the year is above that for England and Wales while the infant mortality rate is exceptionally favourable.

The local deathrate shows a sharp rise, exceeding a similar rise for England and Wales. In this connection the Registrar General estimates the average local age distribution as older than that for England and Wales as a whole and the application of his Comparability Factor of 0.92 gives a standardised Death Rate of 12.1 (England and Wales 11.7).

The chief causes of death were: Heart and Other Circulatory Diseases 30, Cancer (all sites) 9, Nephritis 8, and Tuberculosis (all forms) 3. For another year no local death is recorded from Road Traffic Accidents.

The following table shows the main local vital statistics over the ten years 1940-49:-

	<u>Birth Rate.</u>	<u>Death Rate.</u>	<u>Inf.Mort. Rate.</u>
1949	16.9	13.1.	18
1948	16.2.	10.4.	29
1947	18.5	12.1	26
1946	16.9	12.7	9
1945	14.5	10.9	22
1944	16.8	12.1	54
1943	15.9	12.6	39
1942	11.1	9.9	55
1941	11.8	11.4	23
1940	12.0	10.1	52

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

No important change occurred during the year.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supplies.

The Town is supplied by 2 water pumping plants, both electrically operated, from which a constant and normal supply of water is distributed by main to 1962 houses (approximate population 6355), and by stand pipes to 4 houses (approximate population 10), while 40 houses (approximate population 125) are supplied by private wells.

78 samples of water taken by your sanitary inspector were submitted to the Luton Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination, and 30 samples by Messrs. Rideal, Rideal & Sciver, London for bacteriological examination.

Summary of samples submitted for bacteriological examination to the Luton Public Health Laboratory.

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of samples.</u>	<u>Satisfactory.</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory.</u>
Town Supply: Raw Water	66	64	2
Town Supply: Chlorinated water	12	12	-
Private Wells	-	-	-

Summary of samples taken for bacteriological examination by Messrs. Rideal, Rideal, & Sciver, London.

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of samples.</u>	<u>Satisfactory.</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory.</u>
Town Supply: Raw Water	19	16	3
Chlorinated Water	11	10	1

General Remarks:

The geological position of Stevenage lies on the edge of a basin and therefore the water supply will always be liable to surface contamination. During recent years the water supply has intermittently been contaminated and, to counteract this a plant was installed in April (1949) for the water to be super-chlorinated at the inlet to the reservoir with de-chlorination at the outlet.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Total number of inspections for all purposes 916, divided as follows:-

Defects under the Housing Acts	286
Defects under the Factories Act	29
Prevention of Infectious Diseases including disinfection and disinfestation	10
Sanitary conditions of school, public halls & cinemas.	6
Inspections under the Milk and Dairies Order (including farms).	69
Inspection of slaughterhouses, butchers' shops, vans and food stores.	94
Meat and Food inspections	15
Miscellaneous food inspections	18
Prevention of nuisances	42
Inspection of drainage etc.	22
Inspection of the Town's water supply and water samples.	78
Inspection re rats and mice destruction	8
Inspection re Insect pestation	6
Inspection under the Food and Drugs Act	
(i) Ice Cream	51
(ii) Restaurant Kitchens	41
(iii) Preparation Rooms	8
Inspections re smoke observations	7
Inspections re Shops Act	12
Inspections re Moveable Dwellings	88

Miscellaneous.

Inspections re storage of petroleum	14
Inspections re living and social conditions of applicants for council houses	8
Inspections re mortuary	4

Sewage and Sewage Disposal.

The Town is provided with a foul sewer 24" diameter leading to bacterial treatment at the Sewage Disposal works and a 36" surface water sewer discharging into a water-course, both of which are satisfactory.

Refuse Collection and Disposal of Salvage.

House refuse collection, the disposal of same and the cleansing of the Town is supervised and carried out by the Surveyor. The refuse is disposed of by semi-controlled tipping.

During the year 30 tons of materials were salvaged which realised £180.

Smoke Observations.

4 smoke observations were taken at a factory from which intermittently a nuisance was caused by grit emissions. By request a grit arrestor was installed which has given satisfactory results.

Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928.

14 premises are licensed for petroleum, carbide of calcium etc. and the regulations are satisfactorily complied with.

Section D.

Housing.

Routine house to house inspection was carried out at 94 houses and 10 houses were inspected for complaints with regard to repairs.

91 Council houses were erected during the year and 10 by private enterprise.

Overcrowding Act, 1936.

During the year only 1 house was found overcrowded.

Sanitary improvements were undertaken in existing dwelling houses, viz:-

Premises re-drained	Nil
Sanitary improvements including drainage	90
Other work for the abatement of nuisances	28

3 formal notices were served and the rest of the work was carried out by persuasive methods.

Verminous Premises.

During the year no complaints were received.

SECTION E.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH IN RESPECT OF THE YEAR, 1949, FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT OF STEVENAGE, IN THE COUNTY OF HERTFORD.

PART I OF THE ACT.

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors.

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of		
		Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	8	3		
(ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	46	20		
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises).	2	6		
TOTAL	56	29		

2. CASES in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	3	3			
Overcrowding (S.2)	1	1			
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)					
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	1	1			
(b) Unsuitable or defective					
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).	6	6			
TOTAL	11	11			

PART VIII OF THE ACT.

OUTWORK.

(Sections 110 & 111)

Number of Outworkers 1. i.e. Wearing apparel.

Inspection and Supervision of Food etc.

MILK.

There are only 7 registered producers of milk in the district from which 1 retails Accredited milk, 1 supplies ungraded milk to a dairyman for retail and from the other 5 the milk is collected and pasteurised before distribution.

In addition there are 4 registered retailers from whom milk is produced outside the Stevenage district, 2 being licensed for the sale of Tuberculin Tested milk and 2 for Pasteurised milk.

60 samples of milk were taken for bacteriological examination which gave the following results:-

<u>Description.</u>	<u>No. of Samples.</u>	<u>Passed.</u>	<u>Failed.</u>
Tuberculin Tested	31	19	12
Accredited	9	4	5
Pasteurised	15	14	1
Ungraded	5	1	4

ICE-CREAM.

At present there are no manufacturers of ice-cream in Stevenage.

43 samples of ice-cream were taken for bacteriological examination from retailers, restaurants etc., and the following summary shows the provisional grading:-

	<u>No. of samples.</u>	<u>Grade 1.</u>	<u>Grade 2.</u>	<u>Grade 3.</u>	<u>Grade 4.</u>
1949	43	13 (30.23%)	12 (27.90%)	8 (18.60%)	10 (23.25%)
1948	25	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	2 (8%)	8 (32%)

The average percentages are not very satisfactory and may be accounted for by the following description:-

1. At "A's" premises where ice-cream was manufactured (in an adjoining district) under hygienic conditions and with up-to-date machinery, the cause of unsatisfactory samples taken from retailers in Stevenage was attributed to the site of the Factory which was considered a bad one. By persuasion of the Sanitary Inspector in the aforementioned district the firm in question has suspended manufacturing Ice-Cream.
2. Mr. "B" a manufacturer (in an adjoining district) supplied 2 retailers in Stevenage namely "C" and "D". At "C's" premises all the samples came out grade 4, (Unsatisfactory) and at "D's" premises all the samples came out grade 1 (Satisfactory).

Following an investigation of "C's" premises the source of their unsatisfactory samples was traced to the refrigerator which was not being defrosted often enough and caused the conservator to be in an unhygienic condition.

It is anticipated that the reports for the year (1950) will be more favourable.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

There are 4 licensed private slaughterhouses (including one knackers' slaughterhouse) in the District which are kept up to a fair standard. Only occasional slaughterings licensed by the Local Food Officer are carried out, amounting in all to 21 pigs of which the carcasses of 15 were inspected.

Food surrendered as unfit for human consumption in shops, stores, etc., have to be certified before replacements can be made.

Bakehouses, restaurant kitchens, preparation rooms, manufacturers of preserved food and tradesmen's vans etc., are inspected with a view to keeping up a good standard of cleanliness,

FOOD POISONING.

1 notification of Salmonella was received (referred to in Section F).

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Total notifications of infectious disease (after correction) were as follows:- Scarlet fever 13, pneumonia 2, measles 1, acute anterior poliomyelitis 1 and food poisoning 1.

The scarlet fever cases were grouped mainly in the fourth quarter of the year and confined to the 3 - 10 age group, the outbreak being of mild severity and low infectivity, accompanied by a considerable number of mild sore throats without a rash.

The single case of acute poliomyelitis occurred in an adult in the month of August during the period of nation wide prevalence.

The single case of food poisoning, confirmed as due to Salm. Typhi-Murium, was carefully investigated but no source of infection could be traced, though a meal taken outside the district was strongly suspected.

For another year no case of diphtheria was confirmed in the district. Despite its continued absence from the area the offer of protection of infants by immunisation continued to be accepted by a large majority of parents.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Deaths during the year.

Age Periods.	New Cases				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-
25 - 35	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
35 - 45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
and over	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Totals	2	2	1	1	-	3	-	-

Totals of new notifications were identical with the figures for the previous year but deaths from respiratory disease numbered 3 against 1 for 1948.

After final transfers the Registrar General has allocated to the district 2 (female) deaths from respiratory tuberculosis and 1 (female) death from other forms of tuberculosis, giving the same total of 3 deaths from such cause.

In conclusion, I would acknowledge having received every help from your chief officers and particularly would I acknowledge the invaluable help received from your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. H.Foden, who has been responsible for compiling the Sanitary sections of this report.

Your obedient Servant,

VICTOR R.WALKER,

District Medical Officer of Health.

